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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 9 May 2017, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Munir (Vice-President) ..... (Pakistan)

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In the absence of Mr. Shava (Zimbabwe), Mr. Munir (Pakistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 8: Integration segment (*continued*)

1. **The President** said that the current theme of the Integration Segment, the eradication of poverty, spoke to the core of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and represented a multi-stakeholder approach to policy formulation.

Panel discussion: "National experiences"

2. **Ms. Thompson** (former Government Minister and Senator, Barbados, and former Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development), moderator, said that the composition of the panel represented the geographic diversity of Economic and Social Council Member countries. The panel was designed to focus on national experiences, which would provide crucial insight on gaps in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals platform. The international community must share experiences in order to identify successful policies and approaches while avoiding implementation pitfalls. The United Nations system must provide the level of support necessary to ensure that Member States were successful in crafting national initiatives for the achievement of the Goals.

3. **Mr. Sareer** (Permanent Representative of the Maldives to the United Nations), panellist, speaking as the Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said that poverty eradication had been clearly highlighted in the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway; the Alliance consequently worked to ensure coherence between the SAMOA Pathway and the 2030 Agenda, both in terms of means of implementation and follow-up and review.

4. The first step to achieving integration among all three pillars of sustainable development was improving coordination and coherence at all governance levels while moving beyond silos; economic, social and environmental challenges must be considered as cross-cutting issues. In 2016, the Maldives had completed its first national dialogue on the Sustainable Development Goals, designed to identify gaps in mainstreaming the Goals and consequently to improve intersectoral coordination.

5. Greater human resources and technical capacities were needed to assist small island developing States and other developing countries to address vulnerabilities, especially with regard to data collection and analysis. Following the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators, the remaining capacity deficiencies of many national statistical offices must be addressed by the United Nations and Member States as a priority.

6. The lack of available funding remained a major obstacle to pursuing new policy initiatives. Due to their small size, remote locations and vulnerability to natural hazards, small island developing States had difficulty attracting private investment. International public finance nevertheless remained a necessary component for the implementation of the Goals.

7. Oceans were the main poverty eradication resource available to small island developing States like the Maldives. His country was reliant on the fishing and tourism industries, which both required healthy oceans. Faced with such a narrow resource base, efforts at poverty eradication must go hand-in-hand with the sustainable use and conservation of oceans and seas, as well as the implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. In the Maldives, sustainable fishing was being ensured by permitting pole and line fishing and restricting other harmful methods. While tourism had prospered, careful attention was being paid to the protection of fragile ecosystems and the promotion of ecotourism and environmentally sound policies.

8. Like many small island developing States, his country faced limitations in public spending, as well as limited space and infrastructure to take action on climate change. However, it had committed to a green economy strategy that included projects such as the Scaling Up Renewable Energy Program in Low Income Countries.

9. The Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Partnership Framework had seen the registering of 300 government and external actors and the creation of a steering committee based in New York as well as a reporting template. Alongside the SAMOA Pathway, the Partnership Framework sought to provide a forum for support and information sharing, as well as to encourage new projects and the tracking of their progress.

10. United Nations agencies must coordinate efforts to ensure funding, means of implementation, and capacity-building while remaining guided by national plans and priorities.

11. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations), panellist, said that his country was often cited as a success in terms of

poverty eradication. In 2004, 70 per cent of Peruvians had lived in poverty, and 17 per cent in extreme poverty. Just 13 years later, only 20 per cent of Peruvians lived in poverty and fewer than 3 per cent suffered from extreme poverty. Such radical changes, however, had not merely been the result of macroeconomic policies. Despite a series of structural and political reforms in the 1990s, Peru had failed to reduce rural poverty during that time. Realizing that the existing model of economic development was flawed, starting in 2000 the Government had changed its approached and created the Acuerdo Nacional, whereby many long-term policies were developed with the input of civil society and a basic development consensus was reached. The Acuerdo was likewise accompanied by specific policies targeting rural areas in particular. Investments were made in infrastructure, telecommunications and sanitation to reach the most vulnerable populations and give them access to markets and revenue-generating activities. Programmes were later developed to address different age brackets, including children and pensioners. Consequently, it was important to note that poverty eradication in Peru had been the result of more than 20 years of macroeconomic policies combined with targeted programmes that went beyond monetary poverty measures.

12. Multidimensional poverty must continue to be further taken into account in Peru. For instance, chronic malnutrition and anaemia among indigenous peoples remained significant problems. Anaemia could not be reduced without coordinated integrated policies across many different sectors and ministries. Likewise, targeted programmes for the financial inclusion of rural communities had been launched using mobile phones and online money transfers.

13. Economic growth and macroeconomic stability had been essential for the success of Peru, but its alleviation of poverty could not have been accomplished without highly specific policies targeting vulnerable segments of the population. Moreover, the country still faced challenges, especially as 45 per cent of people were at risk of returning to poverty.

14. **Mr. Simanainen** (Social Security Institution, Finland), panellist, after showing a video introducing the basic income experiment in Finland, said that the experiment was not primarily a poverty reduction mechanism; its main goal was determining if basic income had a positive effect on the employment rate. Within the basic income model, which gave each participant €560 a month, there was no change in the income of the unemployed; individuals would only see an increase in their income if they began employment during the experiment.

15. There were many limitations to the experiment. Its limited target group meant that there was no in-depth information on other potentially interesting population groups (employed middle-wage earners, for instance). As the experiment only tested one basic income model, no information could be gleaned on different tax rates or different basic income levels. Finally, the small nationwide sample meant that no data was included on spillover effects. It would be crucial to take those limitations into account before making any political decisions.

16. The experiment was also subject to constitutional limitations, as it was not morally possible to require compulsory participation in experimental conditions that would knowingly make some people worse off. Designing a treatment was just as difficult as designing a policy, and trials and preparation required significant time and resources. As experiments were a learning process, a series of experiments would be needed to obtain comprehensive information on system-wide changes. However, large-scale system reforms might prove to be too difficult for experimentation.

17. **Ms. Thompson** (former Government Minister and Senator, Barbados, and former Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development) said that with regard to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda, discussion had largely revolved around sound policymaking that was based on data, research and statistics. The basic income experiment in Finland was an extremely strong example of data-based policymaking. As billions of people still made less than $2 a day, the issue of basic income was a recurring theme in discussions on sustainable development.

18. **Mr. Esteves** (BRICS Policy Centre), panellist, sharing the successes of Brazil in terms of poverty reduction, said that in 1990, 25 per cent of Brazilians had lived on less than $1.25 a day; that figure was less than 4 per cent in 2012. Brazil had also pulled out of the hunger map during the 2000s as a result of two policies: the conditional cash transfer programme Bolsa Familia and the food security programme Zero Hunger. Launched in 2003, the conditional cash transfer programme had enrolled 14 million families and become the world's largest programme of the sort by 2012, with multiple knock-on effects on health, education and gender. The Zero Hunger programme had integrated a number of existing programmes in

food acquisition, farming and school feeding via an interministerial committee.

19. All of the poverty eradication policies adopted in Brazil had come from policy networks and were designed to be intersectoral; they were all managed through an interministerial steering committee. Institutional capacity had previously existed in Brazil, a country which already possessed a strong database about families living in poverty, data management procedures, food acquisition programmes and financial institutions; there were still a number of bottlenecks to overcome, however.

20. The role of the United Nations was precisely to help middle-income countries overcome such bottlenecks, not by implementing policies, but by supporting policy development, especially with knowledge management, assessment and monitoring. United Nations agencies had been critical for the success of Brazilian policies; they had collaborated with the Brazilian Government to create joint policy centres dedicated to establishing a bridge between domestic policy networks and international policy centres. Two of these centres were the International Poverty Centre for Inclusive Growth, created with the United Nations Development Programme, and the Centre of Excellence against Hunger, created with the World Food Programme. Both programmes supported domestic policies with monitoring and assessing results; they also helped with diffusing those policies around the developing world. Both policy centres promoted South-South cooperation as a means to fight poverty and hunger. However, contrary to what had been initially believed, Brazilian policies could not be easily transferred to other national contexts, as no other area in the developing world had the institutional framework to allow for the implementation of the same policies. However, policy dialogue had been fostered with many countries in Africa. The Brazilian Government now believed in promoting policy dialogue rather than transfer and called the new modality trilateral cooperation. Such cooperation comprised a dialogue between beneficiary countries, international organizations (or other bilateral agencies) and the Brazilian Government.

21. **Mr. Sambili** (Economics Department, Egerton University, former Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Kenya), panellist, said that his country's experience in terms of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals necessarily remained limited at the time. As the Goals had been designed in an interconnected fashion, they called for a deliberate integration of policies. Integration would result in simultaneous achievement of many objectives, maximize the use of available resources, minimize sectoral approaches and eliminate waste and duplication of efforts.

22. Some of the best practices in Kenya included the creation of an inter-agency technical committee that included governments, development partners, non-governmental organizations, trade partners, the Council of Governors and the private sector. Also, the Government had signed a memorandum of understanding with the internet provider Safaricom, which had enabled the transmission of messages regarding the Sustainable Development Goals to over 25 million subscribers. The implementation of the Goals was moreover being mainstreamed into national planning frameworks that allowed for sustainable budgeting and tracking.

23. Poverty reduction had been one of the Government's main focuses for the previous two decades. An integrated social protection policy had been launched through an inclusive process that provided a transparent and shared platform for knowledge sharing. All cash transfer activities were included on the same platform.

24. To address the social dimensions of poverty reduction, Kenya provided free primary education and full subsidies for secondary school tuition. A number of specialized programmes also targeted marginalized areas, such as the 10-year Common Programme Framework for Ending Drought Emergencies, a collaborative framework that involved the United Nations, development partners, the Kenyan Government, civil society and local communities. Other programmes addressed the economic dimensions of poverty and the challenge of widespread unemployment, further complicated by negative attitudes towards work among youth and corruption. Consequently the Government had renewed its emphasis on technical education and expanded its national youth service programmes. It provided highly subsidized revolving funds to youth, women and persons with disabilities. It reserved 30 per cent of Government contracts for those groups and ensured that at least 30 per cent of public sector positions were held by women.

25. In terms of the environmental dimensions of poverty reduction, the Government had launched a number of tree planting and nurturing programmes. It supported community-driven forest management and conservation and had developed a major rural electrification programme to reduce the use of charcoal and firewood.

26. The Government had transformed national revenue collection by establishing the iTax system, a

user-friendly tax collection system that integrated data from multiple sources. The use of information and communications technologies in Kenya had empowered many young people, reduced the cost of doing business and promoted financial inclusion, especially through the use of mobile banking.

27. In terms of tackling the social dimensions of poverty, Kenya had begun to support specialized medical treatments under its national health insurance framework. There was no age limit to receive such benefits and all unemployed persons were included. A devolved system of health services had also encouraged mobility among qualified doctors and nurses; localized incentives brought their expertise to rural and remote areas.

28. The country's limited capacity threatened the implementation and sustainability of such transformative programmes, while corruption continued to negatively impact the optimal use of resources. It remained difficult to obtain accurate data, in part due to a lack of research and analysis expertise. Rigid governmental systems and regional turf wars posed further challenges to poverty eradication in Kenya.

29. **Ms. Thompson** (former Government Minister and Senator, Barbados, and former Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Coordinator, United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development) said that financing had long been a significant issue for small island developing States, which faced unique challenges, limited capacity and vulnerability to external shocks. Given that small island developing States were increasingly graduating to middle-income status and receiving less official development assistance (ODA) and foreign direct investment despite still being in the throes of the recent financial crisis, financing for development posed several specific challenges. Panellists had described how innovative financing practices involved stamping out corruption, establishing partnerships with the private sector and strengthening the tax base. However, she wondered how relevant such innovative financing could be for small island developing States, which possessed small private sectors mostly composed of small and medium-sized enterprises and were unable to collect significant taxes.

30. **Mr. Saneer** (Permanent Representative for the Maldives to the United Nations) said that the biggest hurdle faced by small island developing States was their reclassification by international financial institutions and the United Nations system. The Maldives were a clear example of the challenges posed by graduating to middle-income status. Although his country had graduated in 2011, nothing had really changed on the ground; it was merely the country's gross domestic product (GDP) that had increased. The Maldives continued to have a low economic base, poor transport, and no exports; in addition, the country now had limited access to concessionary loans. It was remarkable that his country had graduated to middle-income status, but it could never graduate from its status as a small island developing State.

31. The story of the graduation of the Maldives was illustrative: just six days after the Committee for Development Policy had decided to graduate the country to middle-income status, a tsunami had hit and washed away 60 per cent of the country's GDP in a single day. Small island developing States would always remain vulnerable to hurricanes, tsunamis and other natural disasters. Despite the fact that after Botswana, all the other countries to graduate to middle-income status had been small island developing States, the United Nations system still had a limited understanding of their specific vulnerabilities and relied too heavily on GDP as the sole indicator of status.

32. Small island developing States were also witnessing an unfortunate downward trend in ODA. As a result, many countries faced challenges in mobilizing domestic resources. The Maldives had a small tax base that did not really yield successful tax collection mechanisms.

33. Innovative financing could mean different things for small island developing States; his country, for instance, was considering non-traditional donors and new climate financing funds such as the Green Climate Fund. One successful programme that had been devised was the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework, which included the Steering Committee on Partnerships for Small Island Developing States and an annual dialogue with all various international agencies, governments and civil society.

34. **Ms. Thompson** (former Government Minister and Senator, Barbados, and former Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development) said that recent right-wing political movements on the international stage and especially in the United States of America rejected the need for strong social security systems, including such active and direct government grants as poverty alleviation mechanisms and socialized health care. Given that the current political mood posed an overall challenge to the idea of social safety nets, she wondered if Finland and the other Nordic countries had continued to find such mechanisms helpful.

35. She would like to hear more about the effectiveness of direct financial grants as provided by the Bolsa Família programme in Brazil, and about the issue of the abuse of financial support systems and on how to measure, identify and stamp out abuse so that direct aid went to those who truly needed it and individuals were transitioned from mendicancy to productivity.

36. **Mr. Simanainen** (Social Security Institution, Finland) said that research and practical experience proved that better health and equal access to education and employment reduced poverty. The debate thus only concerned which policies were the best to achieve poverty alleviation. The Finnish — and Scandinavian — way of tackling poverty was to concentrate on structural policy changes rather than on single actions. For example, the main objective behind education and health programmes and social insurance policies was that no one was left outside the system; even middle and high income groups were included. As a result, those funding the system considered it to be more legitimate.

37. The basic income experiment still marked a radical change for Finland, however. If it were to be applied nationwide, it would mean moving from an eligibility-based social security system to one where basic income was guaranteed without any conditions. However, all citizens would be eligible for the benefit and the system would have high coverage. Everyone would take part in the funding of the system, in accordance with their income level.

38. **Mr. Esteves** (BRICS Policy Centre) said that as an independent researcher, and not a member of the Brazilian Government, he had more room to manoeuvre. In terms of preventing abuse of the cash transfer programme, the database of those receiving grants was managed at the city level and could be viewed by all Brazilian citizens. Although the programme had been abused at the beginning, an increase in transparency had solved such problems.

39. Despite the fact that the natural evolution of government programmes in Brazil would suggest it should develop a universal basic income, there was currently no political space to discuss such a proposal.

40. The requirements of the conditional cash transfer programme — school attendance for children, immunizations and visits to healthcare clinics for families — would have important structural impacts on a developing country like Brazil. It was hoped that people would be empowered and could then graduate from assistance programmes.

41. In terms of assessment, a yearly household survey was conducted in Brazil that provided an enormous amount of data and illustrated the impact of poverty reduction programmes on women and children. Moreover, the policy centres operated in collaboration with the United Nations provided important comparative knowledge about different conditional cash transfer programmes across the world. Comparisons between Brazil and Mexico had been especially beneficial to both countries in that regard.

42. A random control trial in two African countries had compared in-kind versus cash grants and had determined that cash transfers were much more effective for small farmers than in-kind contributions.

43. **Ms. Thompson** (Former Government Minister and Senator, Barbados, and former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Coordinator for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development) said that data made it possible to design strong policies.

44. How did inclusion, specifically of women, rural women, indigenous peoples and youth throughout the world, relate to poverty eradication? The financial crisis had affected populations globally, but it had hit those groups hardest; they were disproportionately unable to access work. She wondered how stronger partnerships could be built with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society and private sector actors to develop policies in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, and, more specifically, targeted policies that would assist excluded groups.

45. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations) said that a major way in which the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development differed from the Millennium Development Goals was its focus on inclusion. Under the Millennium Development Goals, economic reforms in Peru had benefited cities but failed to reach the most vulnerable populations. For instance, girls with Quechua or Aymara as their first language were 15 times less likely to finish primary school than Spanish mother-tongue girls living in cities. Under the 2030 Agenda, the Government was running bilingual programmes in schools in regions where the first language was an officially recognized language other than Spanish. The Government was also pushing for the 2030 Agenda and associated development plans to be implemented not only at the national level, but also regionally and locally. The National Statistics Institute was working with local governments to combat chronic child malnutrition and anaemia, through a national

conditional cash transfer programme which mandated that parents took their young children to clinics regularly. Fine-tuning such policies was a complex task; all sectors should be involved in the effort, particularly the private sector.

46. The Government was also increasing the financial inclusion of rural populations through a programme that involved using mobile phones to bring banking services to the Peruvian Amazon region; within the next five years, 5 million people would be connected. It was necessary to establish policies to ensure that the mining industry benefitted the most vulnerable. In addition to paying taxes, mining companies should be obliged to use local services and purchase local products; in that way international industry would help rural communities.

47. **Ms. Thompson** (Former Government Minister and Senator, Barbados, and former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Coordinator for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development) said that the mobile phone was a critical tool in developing countries; in Africa also, mobile phones were being used to give disadvantaged populations access to banking, and to other, more essential resources and services such as water, energy and education.

48. The concept of sustainable development was built on the integration of social, economic and environmental concerns. However, environmental sustainable development issues tended to be given short shrift because environment ministers were not usually powerful politicians; social issues were also frequently overlooked. She wondered how the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations more generally could help to deliver, at the national level, the integrated platforms for sustainable development that would bring those who controlled national coffers to the table, emphasizing for them the importance of issues relating to the environment and social growth.

49. **Mr. Sambili** (Economics Department, Egerton University, and former Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya) said that governments would remain the primary drivers of policy direction. The development of Kenya's long-term strategy, Kenya Vision 2030, had been a structured, highly collaborative process involving actors from the private sector, civil society, universities and government ministries. Owing to the inclusive nature of the process, the programme had strong support.

50. Insufficient resources was the primary constraint on pursuing development. In order to determine how to allocate resources the Government had developed a medium-term expenditure framework, which allowed for the ongoing review of priorities every three years. The Government, the private sector and civil society were brought together to focus on the Sustainable Development Goals in a technical working group co-chaired by the United Nations. Meetings of the group made it clear that Kenya Vision 2030 was aligned with the social and economic aspects of the 2030 Agenda, but fell short when it came to environmental issues; the problem was that the consequences of damage to the environment were not obvious in the short term. However, awareness was growing thanks to government efforts, and to natural disasters such as the ongoing drought in Kenya, which had shocked people into considering climate change.

51. Many environmental problems were caused by the need for energy: for example, people cut down forests to heat their homes. Through a rural electrification programme, electricity was gradually being provided to all schools; however, once a school was connected, the nearby homesteads also benefited. Solar energy was also gaining traction.

52. The Government's five-year medium-term plan was dovetailing with programmes under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. In terms of macroeconomic policy, the Government was trying to coherently tie spending to revenue collection. Performance contracts, which required each government ministry to state what would impact on its deliverables, were supporting coherence in the work of the Government. The system increased collaboration and reduced rivalry between the ministries.

53. **Mr. Almeida Cunha** Costa (Brazil) said that his country attached great importance to a multi-stakeholder approach to poverty eradication. In Brazil, civil society played a major role in the design and evaluation of public policy, and it would have a vital role in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

54. **Ms. Johanson** (Norway) asked Mr. Simanainen to elaborate on the expected findings of the basic income experiment and how its results would be measured. Addressing all the panellists, she asked how those in poverty could best be involved in policy design.

55. **Mr. Simanainen** (Social Security Institution, Finland) said that the purpose of the experiment was to analyze the effect of monetary incentives on the employment rate. The income of employed persons would be higher than it was in the current system; previous empirical research led the team to believe that

the basic income would have a positive effect on the employment of the target group.

56. Other mechanisms could also affect employment levels. For example, the basic income scheme had no eligibility requirements, while in the current system individuals needed to be registered as unemployed job seekers. The unconditional nature of basic income might have a negative effect on employment. The problem with the experiment was that it was impossible to distinguish between the effects of the lack of conditions and the monetary incentive, which probably had opposite effects on the employment rate.

57. Follow-up of the experiment would be based on various official registers, such as tax and population registers and registers on the use of social benefits. The researchers would use them to obtain data on income, employment, use of other social benefits and such basic information as family situation. Data would also be collected directly through a questionnaire given to participants.

58. **Mr. Esteves** (BRICS Policy Center) said that in Brazil, beneficiaries were involved in the conditional cash transfer programme at the local level, mainly through schools. The food security programme involved beneficiaries at various stages: there were conferences in the leadup to its implementation, small farmers who were members of cooperatives took part in regular conferences on food security, and the National Council on Food and Nutrition Security, which was responsible for monitoring and proposing changes to the programme, worked with academia and NGOs. In addition, national social movements like the Landless Workers Movement, as well as international ones like La Via Campesina, took part in policy formulation.

59. **Mr. Sambili** (Economics Department, Egerton University, and former Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya) said that in Kenya decisions about school bursaries were taken by community committees, who knew well what each family needed. In addition, the Constituency Development Fund disbursed funding to local governments to be used for specific projects, such as building schools or hospitals. At the [micro level], there was county planning: communities determined what should be prioritized over the upcoming five years, and resources were allocated accordingly, area by area.

60. **Ms. Thompson** (Former Government Minister and Senator, Barbados, and former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Coordinator for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development) asked how responsive the panellists' local systems were to public opinion and the communities they served, and whether they included mechanisms for change. Given that many initiatives took place at the local level rather than the national level, she wondered how involved mayors and local governments were in the design and implementation of policy frameworks and poverty programmes.

61. **Mr. Sareer** (Permanent Representative of the Maldives) said that in the Maldives the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals was managed by a national steering committee. The committee's first round of national dialogue, in 2016, had been a success; it had served to identify gaps and decide how to mainstream areas requiring follow-up into government work. The committee had conducted considerable outreach to engage the island councils of the country's 186 inhabited islands, as well as city councils. Island women's development councils and youth councils were also involved in the process.

62. The Government was currently planning for the next dialogue, to be held later in 2017. There were no detailed mechanisms for engagement with civil society, but the Government was raising awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals, in schools and among NGOs and private sector entities, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

63. **Mr. Karmakar** (Observer for the International Committee for Peace and Reconciliation) said that although the world had enough resources to lift all women and men out of extreme poverty, it persisted. Poverty affected women and men unevenly and therefore must be addressed through a gender lens. Of the more than 50 million refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons around the world, 80 per cent were women and children, making it essential to listen to the priorities of women and girls affected by forced displacement and migration. Women must be included in all decision-making processes that would affect their families and society as a whole. Human beings were responsible for social injustice, slavery, destruction of the environment, wars, poverty and economic disasters, and human beings should therefore also solve those problems. Poverty could only be eradicated if the poor played an active role; a wake-up call should be issued encouraging all to march forward; those who did not respond would be left behind.

64. **Mr. Jourdan** (Observer for the Global Foundation for Democracy and Development) said that his organization promoted the sustainable development of the Dominican Republic, specifically focusing on financing for development and innovative financing tools. It conducted several studies each year on the

impact of foreign investment. A major stumbling block to investment was the lack of a legal framework in some developing countries. Even when policy frameworks existed, the private sector was reluctant to invest in developing countries where there was a lack of transparency and corruption was prevalent. He asked the panellists to share best practices with regard to impactful investment, especially in the renewable energy industry, and to describe any existing policy frameworks that incentivised investment in that area.

65. **The President** questioned whether cash transfer schemes were compatible with the idea that it was better to teach a hungry person to catch fish than to give them a fish. He wondered whether other countries should be encouraged to establish cash disbursement programmes, or whether offering loans and allowing people to earn a living was a more effective means of eradicating poverty.

66. **Mr. Esteves** (BRICS Policy Centre) said that Brazil had both kinds of programme. Small farmers and cooperatives had access to credit from the Brazilian Development Bank and Banco do Brasil (Bank of Brazil). One facet of the problem was that although Brazil was one of the world's biggest exporters of agricultural products, between 70 and 75 per cent of food eaten in Brazil was produced by small farmers.

67. The cash transfer programme was conditional: for families to remain in it, children must be in school and vaccinated, and families must go to clinics regularly. The theory was that if people met the conditions, their capacity would be strengthened, and they would eventually be able to leave the programme. The cash transfer programme thus met both hungry people's immediate needs, and their longer-term need to develop skills that would get them out of poverty.

68. **The President** said that one of the conditions of the Pakistani conditional cash transfer programme was that cash must be disbursed to the lady of the house. In that way, the programme empowered women. Women were generally more responsive and responsible than men, and the programme was a success.

69. **Ms. Thompson** (Former Government Minister and Senator, Barbados, and former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Coordinator for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development) said that in the majority of countries, like in Brazil, most of the food consumed was produced by smallholders. Women produced most of the food in the world, yet they were often barred from owning the land that they farmed, and frequently could not afford the food they produced. That was one reason that a gender lens was needed when developing policies.

70. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations) said that Peru's energy mainly came from hydroelectricity and fossil fuels. The Government's goal was to have a diversified matrix, but legislation was not yet favourable to foreign investment. Consequently, and also for technical reasons, foreign investment in other sources of energy was not significant, although there was great potential. Already in the north of the country there was some investment in oil, and in the Department of Tacna in the south, Enel Green Power, an Italian company, had made the first investment in solar energy. Renewable energy was important for Peru due to its high vulnerability to climate change; the Government was promoting all industries that would contribute to reducing its vulnerability, in particular through reforestation. Water was an important issue because a large part of the population did not have access to clean water. The Government was seeking to foster private investment in that area via a scheme called *Obras por impuestos* (Works for taxes), which gave private companies the chance to take on projects, generally to build infrastructure, in exchange for lower taxes.

71. **Mr. Sareer** (Permanent Representative of the Maldives to the United Nations) said that his Government was also focused on renewable energy and addressing climate change. It currently spent 90 per cent of GDP on importing fossil fuels; unless it reduced its reliance the country could not proceed with economic development. The Government's eventual aim was to rely exclusively on renewable energy and it was on track to meet its first target, to have renewable energy account for 50 per cent of peak load energy consumption within three years.

72. International corporations in the hotel industry operated resorts on 110 of the nation's islands and many of them were taking the initiative to promote renewable energy. The Government had entered into various international and private sector partnerships with a view to converting the entire country into a renewable energy producer.

73. **Ms. Thompson** (Former Government Minister and Senator, Barbados, and former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Coordinator for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development) said that investment in green energy was outstripping investment in traditional every sources, a change that would enable developing countries with capacity for solar, wind and water

energy to cut spending on fossil fuels and use the revenue from investment in sustainable energy for development projects.

74. Her experience as a government minister had shown that supporting women's employment meant that their families did better: women put more of their income into family care than men did; children ate better and women applied learning within their households. A recent study conducted by Boston University identified the same benefits. The direct gains that came from investing socially and economically in women meant that targeted policy approaches and a gender lens were essential.

75. The Sustainable Development Goals were extremely diverse. She asked whether the panellists anticipated policy trade-offs in implementation of the new development platform, in which areas, and how nexus approaches could minimize trade-offs. She would like to know to what extent it was possible to bridge the gap in implementation by creating more nationally responsive structures. Lastly, she asked how, specifically, the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations system could assist countries in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

76. **Mr. Sambili** (Economics Department, Egerton University, and former Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya) said that insufficient resources would be the major hindrance to the implementation of all the necessary policy actions. Honest, rigorous prioritization on a continuing basis was needed to ensure that the policies with the greatest impact were adopted. While trade-offs were inevitable, if all stakeholders came together to agree on priorities, it would be possible to minimize the damage. The budget constraints meant that resources needed to be divided fairly through legitimate decision-making platforms.

77. With regard to national-level structures that bridged implementation gaps, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations and governments must work together. The way forward involved sharing best practices, for instance through meetings of the Economic and Social Council, so that countries could benefit from others' experiences and best practices could be propagated throughout the world.

78. Many countries needed assistance most of all with data management and analytical capacity. The United Nations could usefully support data collection, which was key to targeting poverty reduction policies. Data must be accurate and disaggregated to inform policy-making. Through South-South and triangular cooperation, experts in different fields should share their skills to support all countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

79. **Mr. Esteves** (BRICS Policy Centre) said, with regard to trade-offs, that it was problematic that Goal 17 had such weak indicators: it still only required 0.7 per cent of GDP in official development assistance, and did not mention automatic means of financing. It was worrisome that the international community continued to bet on private investment, through public-private partnerships. The 2030 Agenda was comprehensive, but Goal 17 simply insisted on growth, without proper consideration of the quality of private investment and the impact it would have on development. International regulation of taxation, which was not mentioned in the Goals, was essential to provide the resources needed for their implementation.

80. Data was critical for the development of responsive policies to bridge gaps. Brazil had taken huge strides in overcoming poverty: data showed that in 2000, only 10 per cent of its population had earned above $ 1.25 a day, while in 2014 only 0.86 per cent had earned less than $ 1.25. The key to such success had been registering families and carefully managing data. Good knowledge management systems must be in place for intersectoral policies to be implemented.

81. The United Nations had the capacity to disseminate development policies around the world. Dialogue between countries mediated by international organizations helped to bridge the gap between experiences and to foster endogenous processes.

82. **Mr. Simanainen** (Social Security Institution, Finland) said that there would always be trade-offs between policy goals, and it was necessary to prioritize. When experimenting with policies, it was necessary to have a clear idea of the policy goals in order to develop a good research design.

83. The issue of responsive policies and data management related to the basic income experiment being conducted in Finland. The object of the experiment was to find out how providing a basic income affected employment, but in the future it might be possible to answer interesting new questions using the data from the experiment, which would be made available to future research groups.

84. The Economic and Social Council could play a useful role for countries like Finland by continuing to organize more such forums which allowed countries to share national experiences.

85. **Mr. Cadena** (Observer for Ecuador) said that international cooperation in tax systems was indeed important in supporting national development projects.

For middle-income countries tax cooperation was fundamental for the implementation of national programmes and the 2030 Agenda.

86. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations) said that economic growth accompanied by distributive, targeted policies designed to close the gaps would ensure that all of society was lifted out of poverty. There must be a level playing field in order for the most vulnerable to benefit from growth. Creating that environment meant building new infrastructure, such as roads and telephone and broadband networks.

87. The 2030 Agenda would be difficult to implement. Latin American governments and ministries were not ready to work in the coordinated way it required, and did not yet have all the requisite data, but they were making progress. The United Nations system could help by specifically supporting the most vulnerable. For middle-income countries, that meant not only cash transfer programmes, but also more targeted programmes, such as programmes to assist Quechua speakers or rural women; or to use technology to include vulnerable groups.

88. **Mr. Sareer** (Permanent Representative of the Maldives to the United Nations) said that it was important to abandon the silo approach and look at interlinkages between the Sustainable Development Goals: viewing issues relating to water, energy, food and climate change as a nexus was crucial for success. The United Nations development system needed to work together. Coherence and coordination between the Secretariat and staff in the field, as well as between different United Nations entities, must become a reality.

89. Clear partnerships were needed between governments, the private sector, civil society, international financial institutions and United Nations agencies in order to implement the 2030 Agenda. Poverty eradication would be impossible if they were not all on the same page. Lastly, every investment in climate change mitigation was an investment in poverty eradication.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.